

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 634

By Black

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Mr. Rufus Lassiter for his meritorious service to the field of education.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is pleased to specially recognize and commend our superlative educators who have given unreservedly of themselves to develop this State's most precious natural resource—our children; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rufus Lassiter is one such extraordinary educator, who has been serving with great distinction as the Principal of Gallatin High School since 2005; and

WHEREAS, in describing his years at Gallatin High School, he uses one word—"family"; Mr. Lassiter is a principal with a faculty of approximately 100 teachers and a support staff of sixty people; and

WHEREAS, the good people of the Gallatin community have long recognized and appreciated Mr. Lassiter's pursuit of excellence since his graduation from Gallatin High School in 1961; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Lassiter furthered his education at Western Kentucky University, where he displayed the same athletic prowess on the football field that he showed in high school; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lassiter continued his intellectual development by earning a master's degree plus forty-five hours at Memphis State University; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Lassiter began his illustrious education career as a teacher of Health and Physical Education at Westmoreland High School, where he was the head football coach for two years, before accepting a position as a recruiter and coach for the University of Tennessee; Mr. Lassiter continued his mentoring of young adults as a teacher and the head football and track coach at Haywood High School in Brownsville; and

WHEREAS, he returned to Gallatin High School as a faculty member and assistant football coach in 1986; and

WHEREAS, he had the distinction of coaching all three of his sons while guiding the football team to become State AAA Champions in 1989 and 1996 and State Runner-up in 1987 and 1991; and

WHEREAS, he became Assistant Principal in 1996 and attained his current position as the Principal in 2005; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Lassiter is an extremely patient and giving person who motivates his faculty and students to reach their full potential, perhaps the greatest of all teaching gifts; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lassiter capably leads his faculty and staff by generously supporting them in every way possible, telling them, "I'll give you anything you need to be successful, but you've got to provide the motivation and the hard work."; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Lassiter inspires all of us to imagine a better future and create a better world by encouraging excellence in his students and faculty; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lassiter implements the unique "Green Light" program at the beginning of each school year, a program he started his first year as Principal which brings in about ninety-five percent of the parents; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lassiter also employed the use of identification badges, worn by every student at Gallatin High School to promote safety, security, and accountability; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lassiter has overcome many challenges during his term as a high school principal, the greatest of which has been the embracing of constantly evolving technology; as a result, Gallatin High School now boasts an impressive ratio of one computer for every two students, utilizes wireless technology, and enjoys the flexibility of being mobile; and

WHEREAS, his leadership abilities were appreciated on the state and national levels as he diligently served as President of the Tennessee Athletic Coaches Association for two terms and as co-chair of the National High School Athletic Coaches Association; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Lassiter is a never-ending source of inspiration to those who know and cherish him and is tremendously admired by students and staff alike; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Rufus enjoys the love and companionship he shares with his wife of thirty-eight years, Carolyn, who has been his partner both personally and professionally; she has served as an educator, school principal, and coach, assisting Mr. Lassiter with his boys' teams even as he assisted her in coaching the girls' teams; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Lassiter is also the proud father of sons Lance, Lawren, and Lyle and the doting grandfather of five, with two more grandchildren expected in 2008; and

WHEREAS, highly regarded as a professional and friend, Rufus Lassiter is the perfect example of a person totally committed to quality education and the highest ideals of public service and should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Mr. Rufus Lassiter as the Principal of Gallatin High School, salute his expertise and dedication as an educator and administrator, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.